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ABSTRACT

In spring 1982, a public opinion survey of Macomb County residents was conducted to explore the attitudes of residents with regard to tax issues and their perceptions of Macomb Community College (MCC) and its services. Telephone interviews, conducted with a random sample of 500 households, revealed: (1) unemployment was viewed as the main problem facing residents; (2) concern about taxes had risen compared with views expressed in a survey conducted five months earlier; (3) respondents viewed property taxes as by far the least fair form of taxation; (4) poor management or waste were seen as the main causes of higher taxes; (5) respondents were more willing to see welfare and unemployment benefits, park maintenance, and library services cut than fire and police services and garbage collection; (6) 30% of the respondents would save or invest the money saved from the July 1982 federal tax cut, and 27% would pay bills with it; (7) 57% of the respondents were aware that a high school diploma was not a prerequisite for taking MCC courses, though only 42% of those without a high school education were cognizant of this fact; (8) respondents viewed working toward a degree or job advancement as the most important reasons for taking college courses; and (9) around 33% of the respondents expressed interest in attending collegiate sports, taking telecourses, or participating in MCC's cultural events. The study report looks at findings for each questionnaire item and includes the instrument. (HB)

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# TAXATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

## A PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY
## OF MACOMB COUNTY RESIDENTS
## MAY 1982

Conducted by the
Center for Community Studies
of
Macomb Community College
14500 Twelve Mile Road
Warren, Michigan 48093

JC 820 327

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PURPOSE

Macomb Community College administers to a wide variety of community needs. Not only does it provide for the individual's higher education and vocational training, but seeks to offer cultural and enrichment experiences for the county's citizens. In addition, the College increasingly finds itself in a leadership role in coordinating county-wide activities designed to address economic and social problems. The public opinion survey serves as a vehicle to define the parameters of this new and changing role of the community college.

This survey was designed to probe the attitudes of Macomb County residents with regard to tax issues and perceptions of Macomb College services offered to the community. It was directed by Jim Jacobs and Betty Pritchard of the College's Center for Community Studies, with telephone interviewing completed between April 30 and May 10, 1982.

METHODOLOGY

The sampling frame for this survey was taken as households with telephones within Macomb County. The sample was generated by computer using a random digit procedure to include those households with unlisted telephone numbers. It was stratified throughout the county proportionate to the estimated population within each telephone exchange.

The respondent selection procedure utilized the Trodahl-Carter grid to control for age and sex distribution. In addition, the respondents were selected to meet the following requirements:

- Residents of Macomb County
- Adults, 18 years of age or older

With a random sample of 500 households, there is a predictable maximum sampling error of $\pm$ 4.5% at the 95% confidence level. That is, if the survey were repeated, the results would be within 4.5% of the stated results 95% of the time. On a question that divides the total population into a 50% proportion, the true value of the proportion will be between 45.5% and 54.5%. On a question that divides the total population into more decided proportions, the sampling error will be less. For example, if the survey results show a 10% - 90% split, the sampling error is $\pm$ 2.7%.

A demographic profile of the survey respondents is presented in Table 1, and compares closely to data from the 1980 Census of Population on those items currently available, namely age and sex breakdowns.

TABLE 1

Macomb County Demographic Profile

Comparison of Survey Sample to 1980 Census

| | Sample | Census |
|---|---|---|
| Male | 44% | 48% |
| Female | 56 | 52 |

| | Male | | Female | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age | Sample | Census | Sample | Census | Sample | Census |
| 18-24 | 20% | 19% | 14% | 18% | 17% | 19% |
| 25-34 | 28 | 24 | 28 | 23 | 28 | 23 |
| 35-44 | 17 | 18 | 15 | 17 | 16 | 17 |
| 45-54 | 17 | 16 | 17 | 16 | 17 | 16 |
| 55-64 | 13 | 14 | 14 | 13 | 14 | 14 |
| 65 + | 5 | 9 | 12 | 13 | 8 | 11 |

Other Demographics of the Survey Sample

| Occupation of Respondent | |
|---|---|
| Professional/technical | 20% |
| Business owner/manager/public official | 11 |
| Sales/clerical | 14 |
| Operative/auto worker | 9 |
| Skilled craftsmen | 7 |
| Service worker/other | 4 |
| Retired/Disabled/Housewife | 27 |
| Unemployed/Laid-off | 7 |

| Total Family Income | |
|---|---|
| $10,000 or less | 14% |
| $10,001 - 20,000 | 19 |
| $20,001 - 30,000 | 26 |
| $30,001 - 40,000 | 20 |
| $40,001 - 50,000 | 7 |
| $50,001 - 60,000 | 2 |
| Over $60,000 | 2 |

| Length of Residency | |
|---|---|
| Less than 1 year | 3% |
| 1 - 5 years | 14 |
| 6 - 10 years | 11 |
| 11 - 20 years | 25 |
| Over 20 years | 47 |

| Highest Level of Education | |
|---|---|
| Less than High School | 17% |
| High School Graduate | 32 |
| Some College | 36 |
| Baccalaureate | 11 |
| Post Graduate | 4 |

TAXES

Few political issues have been as widely publicized in Macomb County this year as taxes. In March 1982, the Macomb County Board of Commissioners mailed a letter to all property owners of Macomb County outlining its plans to fight property tax increases established by the State Assessor's Board. In late April and early May, the controversy over the proposed state income tax increase was reported daily in the mass media. Finally, on the federal level, the one potential source of upturn, at least according to administration economic spokespeople, is the 10% reduction of federal income tax scheduled for July 1st.

In light of this recent centrality, public opinion was tested, not only concerning the perceptions of particular taxes, but what sort of willingness there was on the part of Macomb residents to make cuts in governmental services in order to maintain low taxes.

General Concerns

The first question, "What is the number one problem facing the citizens of Macomb County today?" was the same question posed to Macomb County residents in December 1981. [See Table 2] The results of both surveys are similar: unemployment remains the major issue. In a county where the official unemployment rate is above 16% this is hardly surprising. There are three changes, however, worth noting.

First, the concern around taxes has risen from 22.1% in December to 25.7% in May. This change appears to reflect the intensity of the recent debate. Even while telephone interviews were being conducted, the leading local media story was the governor's attempt to increase the state income

tax. The legislative vote passing the increase was taken the day after interviewing had been completed.

Second, the May survey indicates the decline of inflation as a major issue since December 1981. Obviously, as inflation slows to below 3% adjusted annually, Macomb residents do not feel the purchasing power of their dollars being as seriously eroded as in the past.

Third is a more ominous new category--the general response of "the economy." This suggests the combination of high interest rates, unemployment, wage concessions, budget cuts, tax increases, and collapse of auto industry, has led residents to believe the system has deep-rooted problems. It suggests that over the past five months, the recession has intensified in Macomb County considerably. The appearance of this response might indicate a growing dissatisfaction with the economic future--a belief that the "good life" of Macomb County might not return, even with recovery.

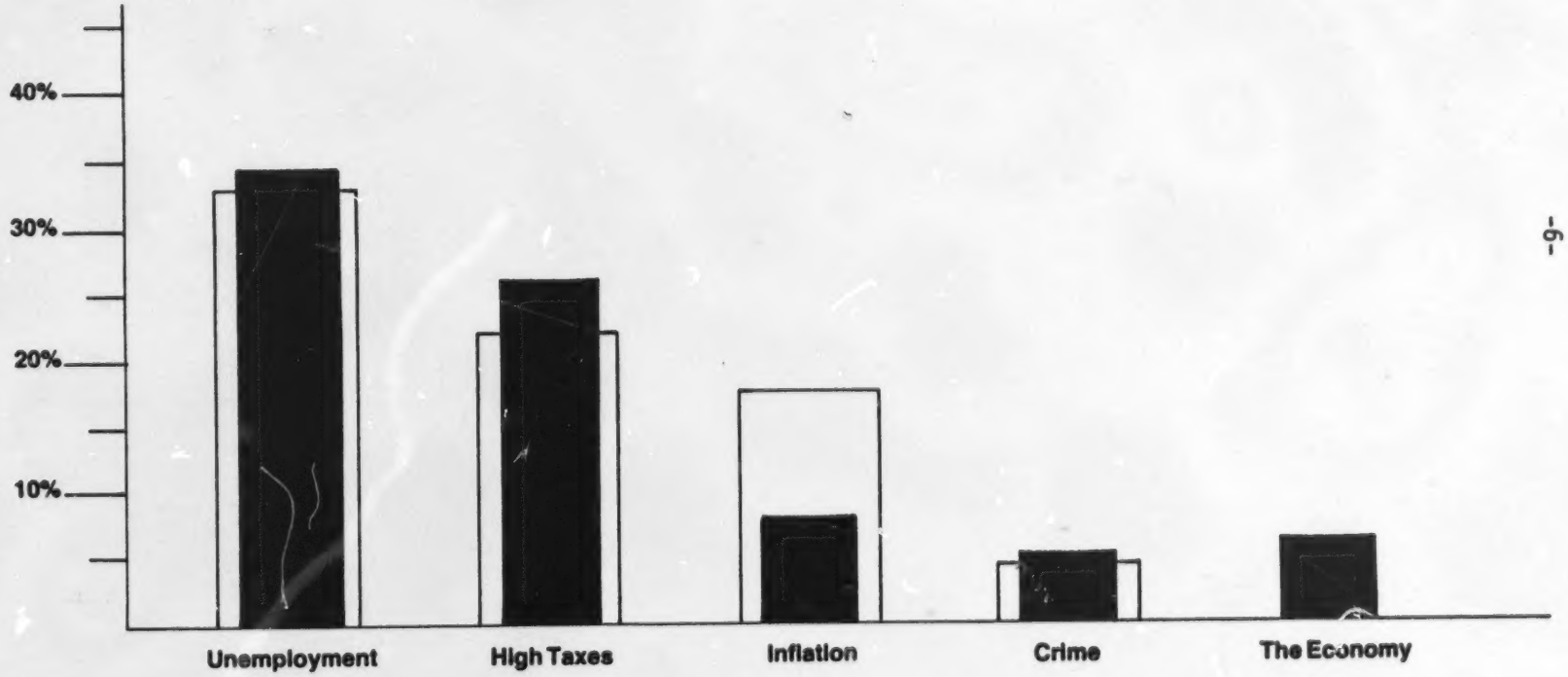
TABLE 2

What do you think is the number one problem facing the citizens of Macomb County today?

| December 1981 | | May 1982 | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Issue | Total Sample | Issue | Total Sample |
| Unemployment | 33% | Unemployment | 34% |
| High Taxes | 22 | Taxes | 26 |
| Inflation | 17 | Inflation | 8 |
| Crime | 4 | The Economy | 6 |
| Other | 9 | Crime | 5 |
| Don't Know | 14 | Other | 11 |
| | | Don't Know | 10 |
| (Base) | (501) | | (500) |

Figure 1

## MACOMB COUNTY'S NUMBER ONE PROBLEM



Fairness of Taxes

The second question attempts to probe Macomb residents' concerns around the fairness of taxes. Many national opinion polls have indicated that Americans are dissatisfied with the inequity of the taxes, as well as the amount of taxes paid.[1] The survey indicated that over half of the Macomb respondents believed the property tax to be the "least fair". The findings presented in Table 3 suggest great difficulty ahead to preserve educational funding for the K-12 level on a method whereby the principal revenue source is the property tax. For those who considered taxes as the "number one problem" in Macomb County, 64% of those respondents viewed the property tax as the most unfair. This suggests that for residents who have major concern with taxes, their energies will be directed at opposition to increases in property tax. Table 4 and Figure 2 show that these findings vary directly with the age of the respondent, with property tax seen as more offensive to older residents.

TABLE 3

Which kind of tax do you think is the least fair?

| | Total Sample | Those Who View Taxes as Macomb's Main Problem |
|---|---|---|
| Local Property Tax | 51% | 64% |
| Federal Income Tax | 14 | 12 |
| Social Security Tax | 12 | 8 |
| State Income Tax | 8 | 8 |
| State Sales Tax | 7 | 2 |
| Don't Know | 5 | 2 |
| (Base) | (500) | (129) |

[1]For a review of national public opinion polls on taxes see: Everett Ladd, Jr., with Marilyn Potter, Linda Basilick, Sally Daniels, and Dana Suszier, "The Polls: Taxing and Spending," Public Opinion Quarterly (Spring, 1979), Vol. 43, No. 1, pp.126-135.

Figure 2

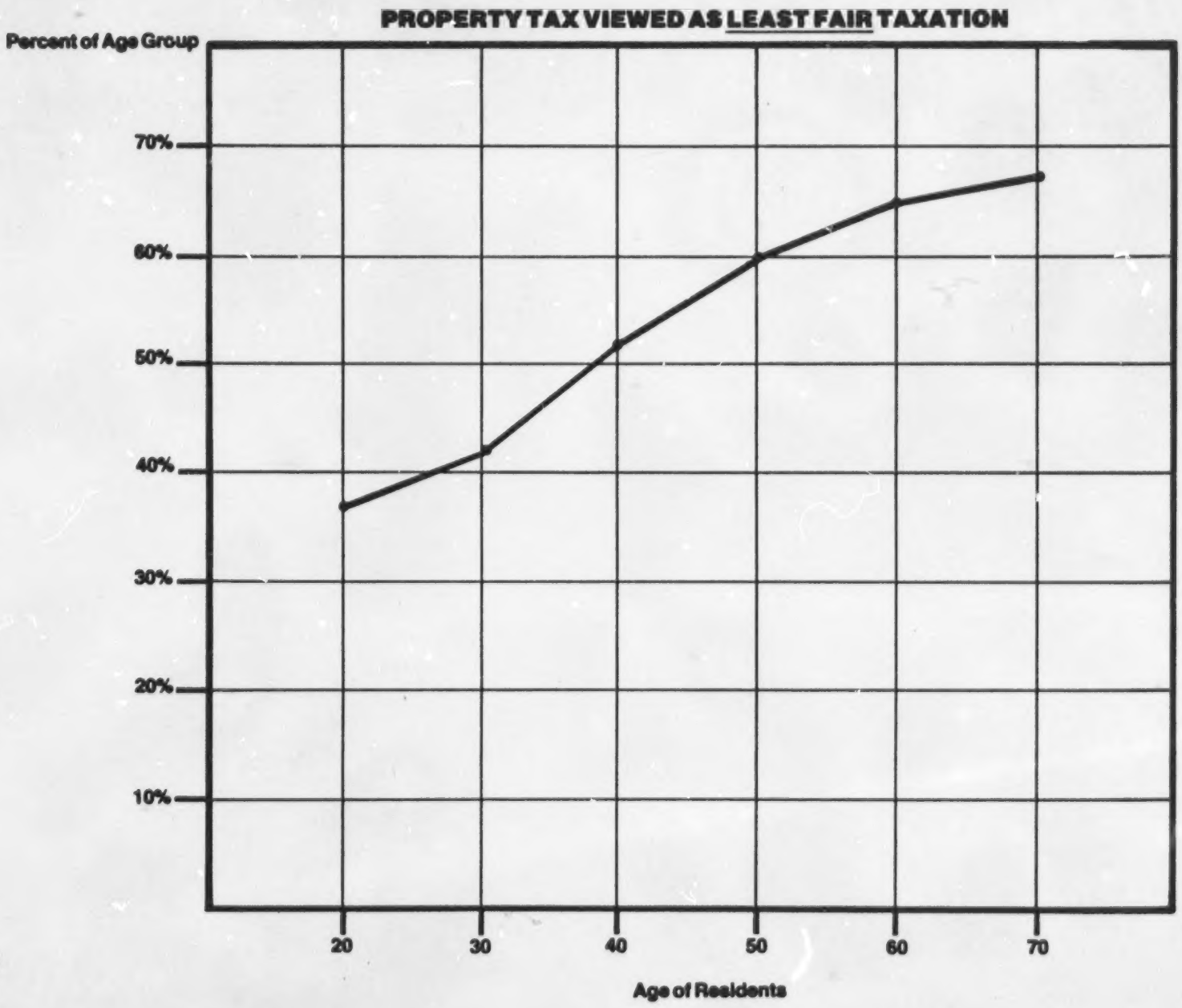

PROPERTY TAX VIEWED AS LEAST FAIR TAXATION
Percent of Age Group
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
20
30
40
50
60
70
Age of Residents

TABLE 4

Which kind of tax do you think is the least fair?

| Age of Respondent | Percent Mentioning Property Tax | Sub-Group Base Size |
|---|---|---|
| 18-24 | 37% | ( 83) |
| 25-34 | 42 | (141) |
| 35-44 | 52 | ( 79) |
| 45-54 | 60 | ( 84) |
| 55-64 | 65 | ( 69) |
| 65 + | 67 | ( 42) |

When the question was put in the affirmative as to which tax was the most fair, the responses were less clear cut. [See Table 5] The state sales tax is considered the most fair, followed by federal income and social security taxes. It is clear that few citizens see the property tax as fair--again suggesting if alternatives to the present tax system are considered, it is in the property tax area where the most attention should be paid.

It is also curious that there was little unfavorable response to the state income tax, which was the subject of major controversy while this survey was being conducted. Indeed, few residents appear to see it as unfair. The response of Macomb County residents to the state sales tax is a bit surprising. In general sale taxes are considered regressive by economists, i.e. they take a greater proportion of earnings from lower income people. However, since 1975 in Michigan essential items such as food and pharmaceutical products are not subject to sales tax. As a result, since 1975, the per capita growth in sale tax revenues has not increased.[2] This suggests that Macomb residents may not "feel" the sales

[2]Harvey Brazen, "Public Sector Overview", in Harvey Brazem ed. Michigan's Fiscal and Economic Structure, preliminary draft, to be published by University of Michigan Press, 1982, p. 22.

tax as much as other taxes, and thus are willing to consider it fair. The finding also supports one of the recent tax reform proposals put forth for Michigan which would cut back property tax rates, with lost revenues made up through an increase in the state sales tax.

TABLE 5

Which tax is the most fair?

| | |
|---|---|
| State Sales Tax | 25% |
| Federal Income Tax | 19 |
| Social Security Tax | 18 |
| State Income Tax | 15 |
| Local Property Tax | 4 |
| None | 11 |
| Don't Know | 6 |
| (Base) | (500) |

Reasons Behind High Taxes

When residents were asked to state why they thought taxes were so high, there was a variety of responses. What is significant, however, is the relative clustering of responses concerning poor management or poor government. Almost one-third of all respondents cited these two factors. Many respondents blamed specific officials, such as President Reagan. Many people also stated that there was too much government spending, but through correlation with later questions, this did not appear to relate to any particular concern with cutting back specific government programs. The general impression was that the government wasted money.

There is little to suggest that many Macomb residents believe that the size of the government, or its involvement in many areas of life are major causes for high taxes. Especially significant was the relative lack of support that taxes were high because government moneys were being spent

on welfare and unemployment benefits. Nor was there strong support for a belief that governmental workers were over paid.

What does seem likely is that a significant number of Macomb residents believe there is waste and mismanagement in government. This suggests that governmental institutions, if they expect taxpayer support, must demonstrate their managerial competence and eliminate examples of personal or institutional waste.

TABLE 6

What do you think is the main reason why taxes are so high?

| | |
|---|---|
| Poor management/government waste | 19% |
| Inflation/costs/cost of living | 18 |
| Too much government spending | 17 |
| Poor leadership/politicians | 12 |
| Unemployment/welfare | 6 |
| Government size | 4 |
| Government payrolls | 3 |
| Other | 11 |
| Don't know | 10 |
| (Base) | (500) |

Service Cutbacks

Macomb residents are interested in keeping taxes down, even if it means a loss in some governmental services. [See Table 7] It is significant, however, that there are relatively few people who will give up major governmental programs so their taxes will lessen. This suggests little support for a "meat ax" approach of many anti-tax groups. In fact, although in the minority, a fourth of the people are willing to support further taxes if services are maintained.

TABLE 7

At this time, if it came down to a cut in local services or an increase in taxes, would you prefer to accept a tax increase in order to keep the services; cut the services to keep taxes the same; or cut services drastically in order to lower taxes?

| | |
|---|---|
| Accept increase, keep services | 28% |
| Cut services to keep taxes the same | 43 |
| Cut services drastically, lower taxes | 19 |
| Don't Know | 6 |
| (Base) | (500) |

The sensitivity of the majority of Macomb residents to any increase in taxes is clear from the responses to the following two questions. When residents were asked whether they support more local taxes to have government create more jobs, they were opposed. [See Table 8] When respondents were asked to support tax breaks for corporations to create jobs, they favored that alternative. [See Table 9] This question, however, did not ask them if they favored a tax break to corporations which might mean their own taxes would rise. When this aspect was pointed out in a question asked in our December 1981 survey, only 37% of the respondents were willing to increase their taxes so that businesses could receive tax breaks. Fifty-six per cent of the respondents were opposed to that approach. Thus it appears there is support for business tax breaks, only if it is clear that it will not raise the taxes of individuals within Macomb County.

TABLE 8

Are you in favor of raising taxes for the local government to develop more job programs in Macomb County?

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 29% |
| Yes, with stipulations | 12 |
| No | 58 |
| (Base) | (500) |

TABLE 9

Are you in favor of granting tax breaks to businesses to create more jobs in Macomb County? (May 1982)

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 58% |
| Yes, with stipulations | 13 |
| No | 27 |
| (Base) | (500) |

Would you be willing to increase your personal taxes if the government would then give further tax incentives to business in order to keep their job in this area. (December 1981)

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 37% |
| No | 56 |
| Don't Know | 7 |
| (Base) | (501) |

The final set of tax questions concerned which services Macomb residents would be willing to cut back in order to keep taxes low. [See Table 10] Macomb residents place high priority on police, fire and education services. What is unusual is the relative support given for welfare/unemployment compensation. A similar survey question asked in a nation sample three years ago brought a response of 43% in favor of cuts in that area.[3] Clearly the economic condition of Macomb County force a greater support for these benefits during this period. Second, as a general finding, there appears little support for large cut backs. If anything, Macomb residents favor small cut backs in what they consider non-essential programs.

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[3]Ladd, Public Opinion Quarterly, p. 127.

TABLE 10

If services had to be cut in your community, which of the following services would you be willing to cut back a lot, cut back only a little, or not cut at all?

| Service | Cut Back A Lot | Cut Back A Little | Not At All |
|---|---|---|---|
| Welfare/unemployment | 20% | 36% | 40% |
| Park Maintenance | 18 | 53 | 26 |
| Library Service | 15 | 51 | 31 |
| Schools | 8 | 28 | 60 |
| Street Repair | 8 | 29 | 61 |
| Garbage Collection | 6 | 34 | 56 |
| Police Service | 3 | 19 | 78 |
| Fire Protection | 2 | 15 | 82 |

This finding, coupled with the previous question concerning why taxes are so high, beings to shed some light on an important dilemma facing elected officials. The "tax revolt" is less directed at governmental programs, or governmental involvement, as it is against what is perceived to be waste and irrelevant spending. There is considerable support for a number of governmental activities, and a willingness to see them as legitimate governmental functions. However, when tax increases are projected and a good portion of the population perceives the government wasteful, then resistance will occur. Further studies could indicate the precise nature of the resistance. The results presented here do not support those who would argue that the public wants a smaller government performing fewer services. Macomb residents want a more efficient government.

Federal Tax Relief

Finally, Macomb residents were asked what they would do with money from the 1982 federal tax cut scheduled for July 1982. Almost a third of the respondents were interested in saving or investing it. [See Table 11]

This suggests support for the economic concept that more savings and investment will result from the tax cut.

To address the theory that the tax cut will stimulate new purchases to lift the economy out of recession, such purchases would appear to necessarily come from the 30% combined responses of "buy something/spend it/use it", "home improvement", and "live on it". The detriment to this theory is that 27% say they expect to use it to pay for past purchases, i.e., "pay bills".

TABLE 11

What will you do with the extra money you will get to keep after July 1st when the federal taxes decline by 10%?

| | |
|---|---|
| Save it/invest it | 30% |
| Pay bills | 27 |
| Buy something/spend it/use it | 17 |
| Home improvement | 7 |
| Live on it/buy groceries/make ends meet | 6 |
| Will not get it | 4 |
| Not enough to do enough | 1 |
| Other | 2 |
| Don't know | 4 |
| (Base) | (500) |

Tax Summary

While unemployment remains the County's main concern, high taxes are a strong number two. The worry over inflation has decreased considerably over recent months. Property tax is overwhelmingly considered the least fair form of taxation. While residents are concerned over high taxes, they are not particularly willing to cut services. Poor management and government waste is thought to be the main reason why taxes are so high. The so-called "taxpayer revolt", at least in Macomb County, is more a concern with the performance of government than simply a desire to lower taxes.

## MACOMB COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The county-wide survey measured residents' perceptions on a variety of issues directly related to Macomb Community College and its services. This was done as part of a continuing effort to be responsive to the community.

### Information Sources

Three questions dealt with the identification of direct communication channels. The most often mentioned single source for information about Macomb Community College is the College's own publications. [See Table 12] Thirty-five per cent (35%) of the county's residents get most of their information through these publications. "Word-of-mouth" also constitutes an important information source when combining the responses of "friends, neighbors, or relatives" (14%) with that of "college students" (12%). Newspapers represent the main information source to 20% of the residents.

TABLE 12

Where do you get most of your information about Macomb Community College?

| | Total Sample | Less Than High School Education | Less Than $10,000 Income | 1-5 Years County Residency |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| College publications | 35% | 31% | 37% | 49% |
| Newspapers | 20 | 20 | 23 | 10 |
| Friends, neighbors, relatives | 14 | 6 | 14 | 8 |
| College students | 12 | 9 | 9 | 13 |
| None | 8 | 19 | 14 | 8 |
| Other | 6 | 5 | 1 | 7 |
| Don't Know | 1 | 7 | 4 | 6 |
| High school counselors | 1 | - | - | - |
| Radio or TV | 1 | 3 | 1 | - |
| (Base) | (500) | (86) | (70) | (72) |

Notable information gaps appear through the survey results as 8% of the respondents report that they do not receive any information about Macomb Community College. Radio and television are either not used as a communication channel or else are ineffective for the College.

High school counselors are also unused as an information source, but this item should be viewed in light of the age distribution of the survey respondents, as only adult residents over 18 were interviewed, and most have been removed from the high school setting for a period of time.

Table 12 also reveals some information about subgroups of the population and their sources of information about the College. For those people with less than a high school education and those whose annual family income is less than $10,000, the proportion of people who say they do not receive such information is greater than the population as a whole. For these people, the "word-of-mouth" information network is less productive for Macomb College, but College publications and newspaper articles do reach them. For newer residents in the county, the newspapers are cited as a main information source by only 10%, but College publications are utilized as a main source by half of this group of people (49% compared to 35% for the total population).

Communication initiated by the prospective student appears to be centered around a telephone call. Over half (59%) of the county residents would call the College if they wanted to find out how to register for a class, as indicated in Table 13. Twenty-one per cent would go in person to the College. Likewise, to find out what courses are available, 34% would call the College and 23% would stop in. [See Table 14] These items

indicate the importance of a convenient telephone transfer to appropriate departments where a caller can receive accurate information, as well as on-campus signs and directions that are easy to find and follow.

Four per cent of the residents would not know how to obtain registration information. While this percentage is low for the general purpose, it is significantly higher among senior citizens (19%) and those adults who did not complete high school (13%).

The role of College publications, including the College catalog, changes from a minor source for information on registration (5%) to a major source (29%) for information on available courses. The College counseling office is not viewed as a particularly appropriate source for either type of information.

TABLE 13

What would you do to find out how to register for a class at Macomb?

| | Total Sample |
|---|---|
| Call the College | 59% |
| Go to the College | 21 |
| Ask friends/relatives | 6 |
| Read College publications | 5 |
| Don't know | 4 |
| Other | 1 |
| Call the College Counseling | 1 |
| Read the newspaper | 1 |
| (Base) | (500) |

| Percent Responding "Don't Know" | | Base Size |
|---|---|---|
| Total sample | 4% | (500) |
| Those aged 65 or over | 19 | ( 42) |
| Those with less than a high school education | 13 | ( 85) |
| Those living in the county 6-10 years | 9 | ( 55) |
| Those with incomes less than $10,000 | 9 | ( 70) |
| Those aged 18-24 | 6 | ( 83) |

TABLE 14

How would you find out what courses are available?

| | Total Sample |
|---|---|
| Call the College | 34% |
| Read College publications | 29 |
| Go to the College | 23 |
| Call the College Counseling | 5 |
| Ask friends/relatives | 2 |
| Don't Know | 2 |
| Read the newspaper | 2 |
| Other | 1 |
| (Base) | (500) |

Physical Facilities

Maximum use of the College's physical facilities by the community is dependent upon the community's awareness of their availability. While 41% of the people are aware that they may use the Physical Education and recreation facilities, fewer (33%) are aware that the community has access to other facilities as well. [See Table 15] This level of awareness is consistently lower among those people under the age of 35, and particularly low among those under 25.

TABLE 15

Were you were aware that Macomb's indoor and outdoor Physical Education and Recreation facilities are available for use by all residents of the county?

| | Total Sample | Age 18-24 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-64 | 65 + |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 41% | 36% | 38% | 46% | 45% | 36% | 50% |
| No | 59 | 64 | 62 | 54 | 55 | 64 | 50 |
| (Base) | (500) | (83) | (141) | (79) | (84) | (69) | (42) |

TABLE 15 (cont.)

Were you aware that Macomb makes other facilities available for community use, such as conference rooms, luncheon and dinner meeting facilities, and classrooms?

| | Total Sample | Age 18-24 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-64 | 65 + |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 33% | 25% | 28% | 38% | 35% | 33% | 50% |
| No | 67 | 73 | 72 | 62 | 65 | 67 | 50 |
| (Base) | (500) | (83) | (141) | (79) | (84) | (69) | (42) |

Athletic Programs

The athletic programs of four-year universities have traditionally been used as a contact point between the university and the community. This has not been the case for community colleges in general, although the potential may exist. Throughout the County, more than half (54%) of the residents are aware that Macomb Community College has collegiate teams, [See Table 16] and 32% of the residents are interested in attending some of their games. Based on the current county population of 487,141 adults, this would translate to an estimated total drawing potential of 156,000 people. The task of actualizing part of that potential can be aided by analysis of the survey data.

Ironically, publicity to increase the awareness of the existence of the College's athletic teams does not appear as a helpful approach. There is no significant difference in the amount of interest in attending games among those people who are aware of teams in comparison to that interest expressed by the general populace. This does not say, however, that publicity of the teams' schedules, won-loss records, and other pertinent details, would not increase attendance among those who are already interested.

The potential spectator is more likely to be young and male. The data reveals a strong correlation between age and interest in athletic attendance, and a slightly greater interest among males than females, 36% and 29% are interested respectively. Interest is particularly high among those who are unemployed or laid off (63%), and somewhat (43%) among those who fall into the occupational category including business owners/managers/supervisors/public officials. It is not influenced by either income level or by the tenure of county residency.

TABLE 16

Sports Teams

Did you know that Macomb Community College has collegiate sports teams, including basketball, baseball, and soccer?

| | Total Sample | Sex | | Age | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Male | Female | 18-24 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55 + |
| Yes | 54% | 61% | 48% | 64% | 57% | 53% | 52% | 42% |
| No | 46 | 39 | 52 | 36 | 43 | 47 | 48 | 58 |
| (Base) | (500) | (219) | (279) | (83) | (141) | (79) | (84) | (111) |

Would you want to attend any of Macomb's collegiate games?

| | Total Sample | Those Aware of Sports Teams | Sex | | Age | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Male | Female | 18-24 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55 + |
| Yes | 32% | 34% | 36% | 29% | 48% | 35% | 30% | 24% | 23% |
| No | 65 | 63 | 61 | 68 | 48 | 61 | 66 | 74 | 77 |
| Don't Know | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| (Base) | (500) | (268) | (217) | (279) | (83) | (141) | (79) | (84) | (111) |

## Admission Requirements

The stereotypical role of college offerings is to extend a high school education. With the emergence of community colleges, however, the role has actually expanded to serve as many community instructional needs as possible, and not necessarily prerequisited by a high school diploma. These include job-specific training, personal development courses, and basic skills improvement as well as the traditional curriculum. Community awareness of the open admittance policy can only widen the scope of the College's effectiveness. The Macomb County survey shows that 42% of the residents are not aware of this policy. The potential direct beneficiaries are those who do not currently have a high school diploma, [See Table 17] amounting to 17% of all adult residents. Among this group, the proportion of people unaware of open admittance is even much greater (58%). This data supports a targeting of opportunity information to this group of people.

TABLE 17

Did you know that you don't have to have a high school diploma to take a course at Macomb College?

| | Total Sample | Those With Less Than H.S. Education |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 57% | 42% |
| No | 42 | 58 |
| (Base) | (500) | (85) |

## Telecourses

The feasibility of extending educational services through telecourses is in part dependent upon the size of the potential market. Tables 18 and 19 reveal that half of the adults in the county are aware of the practice of telecourse classes and about one-third say they would want to take one.

Based upon the 1980 Census, this translates to 32% of the 487,141 adults in Macomb County, or about 155,000 people interested in taking telecourses.

The level of interest in taking such a course is not significantly affected by awareness of the practice, nor does it correlate with the age or sex of the respondent. It does, however, appear to be related to their occupation. Those people in professional or technical positions, and those who are business owners or managers or public officials show more interest in taking telecourses than those in other occupations. People who are currently unemployed also show a high interest level for telecourses, but this group tends to show interest in education and training regardless of the medium.

TABLE 18

Were you aware that many colleges through the country are offering credit courses over public or cable television?

| | Total Sample |
|---|---|
| Yes | 51% |
| No | 49 |
| (Base) | (500) |

TABLE 19

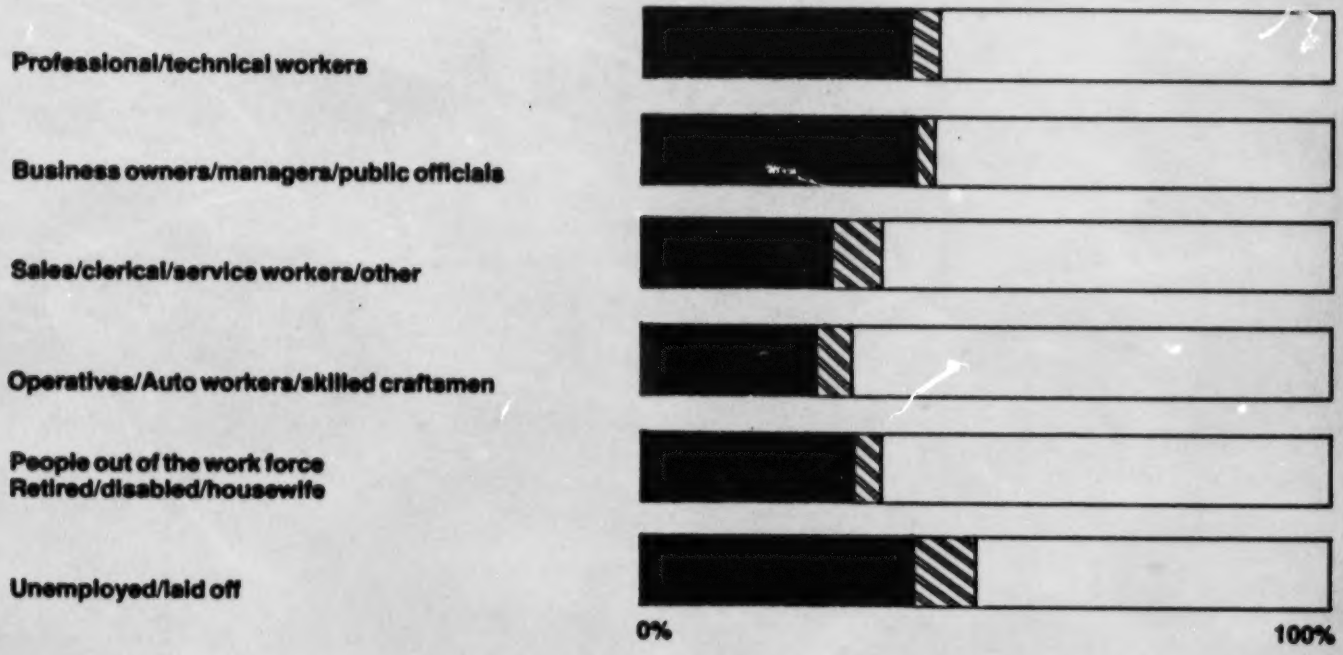
Would you want to take a course offered over television?

| | Total Sample | Those Aware of Telecourses |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 32% | 35% |
| No | 62 | 60 |
| Don't Know | 5 | 5 |
| (Base) | (500) | (253) |

| | Professional/ Technical | Business owner/ Manager/ Public Official | Sales/ Clerical Service/ Other | Operative/ Craftsman | Retired/ Disabled/ Housewife | Unemployed Laid-Off |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 38% | 40% | 28% | 24% | 30% | 40% |
| No | 57 | 58 | 65 | 70 | 64 | 51 |
| Don't Know | 4 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 9 |
| (Base) | (100) | (53) | (92) | (80) | (135) | (35) |

Figure 3

## INTEREST IN TELECOURSES



Educational Motivation

People take courses for many different reasons, and their reasons dictate their choices of course offerings. When asked about the importance of several possible reasons in their individual circumstances, respondents cite working toward a degree as the most important decision factor, followed by job advancement. The reasons are ranked in Table 20 according to the percentage of "extremely important" response each received. The "not at all important" responses, however, do not rank in the reverse order as might be expected. In particular, the reason of taking a course for personal enjoyment and enrichment is actually viewed with more importance than the original ranking indicates.

TABLE 20

Reasons for Taking a Class

| | Extremely Important | Important | Somewhat Important | Not At All Important |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| To work toward a degree | 32% | 29% | 15% | 23% |
| To advance in present job | 30 | 33 | 13 | 24 |
| To learn how to search for a new job | 25 | 28 | 15 | 32 |
| For personal enjoyment and enrichment | 23 | 39 | 23 | 16 |
| To improve basic skills in reading,writing, and math | 20 | 33 | 15 | 32 |
| To learn to cope with everyday problems | 16 | 32 | 22 | 29 |
| To learn about background/ culture | 6 | 16 | 34 | 44 |
| To collect veterns/unemployment benefits | 5 | 20 | 21 | 54 |
| To be better prepared for volunteer activities | 4 | 28 | 31 | 38 |

(Base = 500)

A more meaningful analysis approach to this section is to assign numerical values to each response. A mean value can then be obtained to more accurately reflect all ratings. They are presented in Table 21, grouped into three levels of importance that are statistically different from each other.

The highest group include those reasons for taking a course to work toward a degree, to advance in one's present job, and for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

A profile of those residents who view work toward a degree as important shows that they tend to:

- already have higher education.
- be young.
- have occupations of a professional, technical, or skilled nature, or are unemployed.
- be equal among men and women.

Those who rate job advancement high as a reason for taking a class are described as:

- male.
- under 44.
- earning more than $10,000 annually, but thess than $20,000.
- be business owners or managers, skilled craftsmen, or are unemployed.

Residents who would find it worthwhile to take a class for personal enjoyment and enrichment typically are young (under 34). Whereas personal enjoyment was ranked very low by senior citizens, this group ranked all of the other reasons for taking a class even lower. Personal enjoyment and enrichment was ranked high among:

- high school graduates with no college background.
- skilled craftsmen.
- those earning between $20,000 and $30,000.

The concept of taking a class to learn job search skills decreases in importance with the respondents' age. It appears to be most important among business owners and managers, sales and clerical workers, skilled craftsmen, and particularly those who are unemployed.

Improvement in basic skills is seen as an important motivation by males and those who are 18-24 years of age. Its importance decreases as the amount of formal education increases except that non-high school graduates view basic skills improvement less important than those who do have a high school diploma.

Women are more prone to support taking a class to learn to cope with everyday problems, along with business owners and managers, and the unemployed.

A class for preparation for volunteer participation in community activities is viewed least important by people in mid-life between the ages of 35 and 44 and by business owners and managers. A class offering information about cultural history or ethnic background would be less likely to be attended by older people than those under 24 years of age.

The importance of taking a class to receive veterans or unemployment benefits was expressed more strongly by skilled craftsmen than by those who are currently unemployed. Nonetheless, the overall importance of this reason was rated lowest of all those reasons tested. This can in part be expected due to the nature of the question. It is more socially acceptable to attend classes and receive such direct financial assistance only as a secondary consideration.

Figure 4

**IMPROVEMENT OF BASIC SKILLS**
**CITED AS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT REASON FOR TAKING A CLASS**

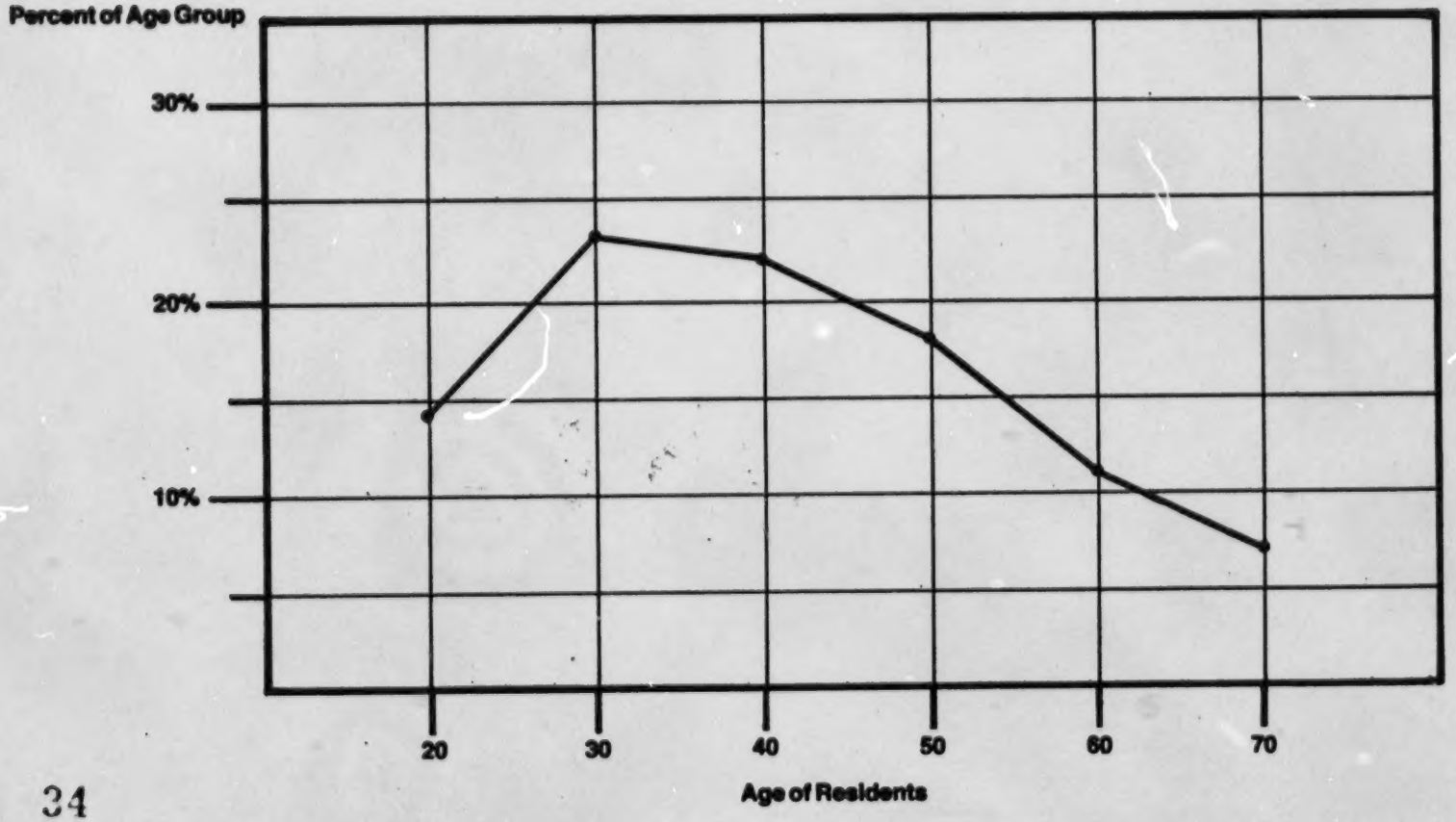


TABLE 21

Please tell me if it is extremely important, important, or somewhat important for you to take a class. . . .

High Importance

| Reason | Mean Response |
|---|---|
| To work toward a degree | 1.72 |
| To advance in present job | 1.70 |
| For personal enjoyment and enrichment | 1.68 |

Medium Importance

| Reason | Mean Response |
|---|---|
| To learn how to search for a new job | 1.45 |
| To improve basic skills | 1.41 |
| To learn to cope with everyday problems | 1.36 |

Low Importance

| Reason | Mean Response |
|---|---|
| To be better prepared to participate in volunteer organizations or church or school activities | .98 |
| To learn about background/culture | .83 |
| To collect veterans/unemployment benefits | .76 |

Key
3 = extremely important
2 = important
1 = somewhat important
0 = not at all important

Throughout this section of the survey, patterns developed in the responses of several demographic groups. Notably, all reasons for taking a class were given less importance relative to the age of the respondent, showing younger adults to be more motivated to attend. Those who are unemployed were also more receptive to taking classes for any reason, but were interestingly joined in this viewpoint by skilled craftsmen.

Tuition Cost

Public perception of the cost of tuition is a guide to the public acceptance of that cost. Without actual experience in paying for classes, many people are not aware of the tuition structure. Residents were asked to guess at the cost to take a course at Macomb. Many responses, particularly from those familiar with tuition structures, were stated as a cost per credit hour rather than cost per course as requested. To maintain consistency, these per-credit-hour amounts were multiplied by three to approximate the cost of a course at that rate, and re-coded to be combined with the per-course amounts as stated.

The results displayed in Table 22 show about one-fourth of the responses within the range of actual costs assumed to be between $50 and $100. Twenty per cent (20%) of the people would not take a guess, and the remainder of the responses are about evenly split above and below the $51 to $99 category.

By utilizing the midpoint of each dollar interval as the class mark, mean dollar amounts can be calculated from the responses among demographic subgroups. Table 23 shows the highest tuition costs are expected by adults 18-44.

Analysis of this survey question can be combined with previous ones regarding motivation behind taking courses. The younger age groups were more supportive of all reasons for taking courses than were older adults, and assumably more interested. The data, therefore, suggests that a promotional campaign directed at people between 18 and 44 years of age would include factual information on actual tuition costs at Macomb.

TABLE 22

Expected Cost of a Class

How much would you guess you'd have to pay to take a course at Macomb College?

| | Total Sample |
|---|---|
| $20 or less | 3% |
| $21 - $49 | 17 |
| $50 | 9 |
| $51 - $99 | 24 |
| $100 | 9 |
| $101 - $299 | 14 |
| $300 - $999 | 3 |
| $1000 and over | 1 |
| Don't Know | 20 |
| (Base) | (500) |

TABLE 23

Estimated Mean Dollar Amounts For a Class

| | Average Cost | Base Size |
|---|---|---|
| Total Sample | $112 | (500) |
| Age Groups | | |
| 18 - 24 | $124 | ( 83) |
| 25 - 34 | 107 | (141) |
| 35 - 44 | 117 | ( 79) |
| 45 - 54 | 84 | ( 84) |
| 55 - 64 | 101 | ( 69) |
| 65 + | 96 | ( 42) |

## Cultural Affairs

Apart from instructional goals, Macomb College seeks to serve the community by creating opportunity for cultural experiences. Interest in such cultural programs centers around plays and musical theater, as over one-third of the residents choose these performances as ones to attend. Table 24 confirms the amount of support, especially in comparison to the small proportion who would be least likely to attend. Concerts were also revealed as having considerable potential.

Young adults (18-24) and those in mid-life (34-55) express more interest in attending all types of cultural affairs. Senior citizens gave strong support only to travel series.

TABLE 24

Preferences for Cultural Affairs Programs

Of symphonys, concerts, plays, musical theater, travel series, lectures, and children's programs, please tell me which ones you and your family would like most to attend?

Which ones would you like least?

| | Most | Least |
|---|---|---|
| Plays | 37% | 9% |
| Musical theater | 35 | 9 |
| Concerts | 30 | 12 |
| Children's programs | 29 | 32 |
| Travel series | 23 | 19 |
| Symphonys | 18 | 38 |
| Lectures | 12 | 24 |

Percentages are based on a total sample of 500, but do not add to 100% as multiple choices were allowed.

The survey attempted to measure preference for an active participant type of cultural affairs program, but the responses are not statistically different, and cannot place one choice above the others. [See Table 25] However, the data does make distinctions as to the potential target of each tested item. A book club would find support amoung the young adults and those in sales or clerical occupations. An art league could look toward those aged 25-34 and over 65 for support, and to business owners and managers as well as sales or clerical workers. A theater group appeals to professional and technical people, and to skilled craftsmen, and particularly to young adults under 24. Professional and technical people and business owners, managers, and public officials are the ones most likely to participate in a speaker's group.

TABLE 25

Participation Programs in Cultural Affairs

Would you be most interested in participating in a theater group, a book club, an art league, or a speaker's group.

| | Total Sample | Occupation | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Professional/ Technical | Business/Owner Manager/Official | Sales/ Clerical | Skilled Craftsmen |
| Book Club | 20% | 13% | 17% | 29% | 18% |
| Art League | 19 | 11 | 26 | 27 | 21 |
| Theater Group | 19 | 24 | 9 | 19 | 27 |
| Speaker's Group | 14 | 22 | 21 | 10 | 12 |
| None | 24 | 28 | 23 | 14 | 21 |
| Don't Know | 1 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| (Base) | (500) | (100) | (53) | (70) | (33) |

TABLE 25 (cont.)

| | Age | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 18-24 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-64 | 65 + |
| Book Club | 28% | 29% | 18% | 21% | 9% | 14% |
| Art League | 16 | 28 | 15 | 15 | 19 | 26 |
| Theater Group | 29 | 16 | 23 | 18 | 14 | 17 |
| Speaker's Group | 11 | 14 | 19 | 14 | 14 | 12 |
| None | 13 | 20 | 24 | 29 | 41 | 29 |
| Don't Know | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| (Base) | (500) | (141) | (79) | (84) | (69) | (42) |

Non-Credit Program Priority

The priority that should be given to programs offered for various special interest groups was assessed from the public's viewpoint. Programs for youth, such as career explorations, hobby crafts, and sports programs was granted the highest rating. [See Table 26] Sixty-one per cent (61%) of the respondents feel that these programs should have a high priority from the College. This response was quite different from the low preference given to children's cultural programs.

Programs for senior citizens and women ranked together as the next highest, and were essentially supported equally among men and women. Programs for business and industry, however, while given the same priority as programs for women and senior citizens by the men of Macomb County, were rated much lower by the women. Public priority was very low for research and employee workshops to be provided to government agencies.

Although this survey question could rank the amount of public support for these non-credit programs, it cannot ascertain the reasons behind the responses. For example, the low priority given to programs for government

agencies does not indicate whether it is a result of general government mistrust, or the perception that such programs are not needed, or perhaps the inappropriateness of the College to provide such services.

TABLE 26

High Program Priority Preferences

| | Total Sample | Men | Women |
|---|---|---|---|
| Youth | 61% | 59% | 63% |
| Senior Citizens | 48 | 48 | 48 |
| Women | 47 | 46 | 48 |
| Business | 42 | 47 | 38 |
| Industry | 42 | 46 | 39 |
| Government Agencies | 25 | 24 | 27 |
| (Base) | (500) | (219) | (279) |

College Summary

Macomb Community College's own publications appear effective in general information dissemination. Most residents would call the College for registration or course information.

Less than half the people are aware of public access to the College's facilities, and only 57% are aware of the open-door admission policy.

The survey data shows untapped potential as one-third of the residents express interest in attending collegiate sports, and a third are interested in taking telecourses.

Individuals view work toward a degree or job advancement as the most important reasons for taking college courses. Publicity of existing tuition rates appears to be a good drawing aspect for attendance in courses.

Interest in cultural affairs is centered around plays and musical theater.

The highest priority for non-credit programs was given to those for youth.

## APPENDIX

1. What do you think is the number one problem facing the citizens of Macomb County today? (OPEN END)

2. Of the following kinds of taxes, which do you think is the <u>least</u> fair? Federal income tax, state income tax, state sales tax, Social Security or FICA tax, or local property tax?

Federal income tax.....1
State income tax.....2
State sales tax.....3
Social Security or FICA.4
Local property tax.....5
DON'T KNOW.....9
NO ANSWER.....0

3. Which tax is the most fair?

Federal income tax.....1
State income tax.....2
State sales tax.....3
Social Security or FICA.4
Local property tax.....5
NONE.....8
DON'T KNOW.....9
NO ANSWER.....0

4. What do you think is the <u>main</u> reason why taxes are so high? (OPEN END)

5. At this time, if it came down to a cut in local services or an increase in local taxes, would you prefer to accept a tax increase in order to keep the services, cut the services to keep taxes the same, or cut services drastically in order to lower taxes?

Accept tax increase, keep services.....1
Cut services, keep taxes the same.....2
Cut drastically, lower taxes.....3
DON'T KNOW.....9
NO ANSWER.....0

6. Are you in favor of raising taxes for the local government to develop more job programs in Macomb County?

Yes.....1
No.....2
YES, WITH STIPULATIONS..3
DON'T KNOW.....9
NO ANSWER.....0

7. Are you in favor of granting tax breaks to businesses to create more jobs in Macomb County?

Yes.....1
No.....2
YES, WITH STIPULATIONS..3
DON'T KNOW.....9
NO ANSWER.....0

If services had to be cut in your community, which of the following services would you be willing to cut back a lot, cut back only a little, or not cut at all?

| | A Lot | Little | Not at all | DK | NA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8. Police services..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 0 |
| 9. Library services..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 0 |
| 10. Fire protection..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 0 |
| 11. Garbage collection..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 0 |
| 12. Street repair..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 0 |
| 13. Welfare/Unemployment compensation.. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 0 |
| 14. Park maintenance..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 0 |
| 15. Schools..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 0 |

16. What will you do with the extra money you will get to keep after July 1, when the federal taxes decline by 10%? (OPEN END)

Now I'd like to ask you a few questions about Macomb Community College.

17. Where do you get most of your information about Macomb Community College? (DO NOT READ LIST)

Newspapers.....1
Radio or TV.....2
College publications....3
College students.....4
Neighbors, friends, relatives.....5
High school counselors..6
Other_____..7
NONE.....8
DON'T KNOW.....9
NO ANSWER.....0

18. What would you do to find out how to register for a class at Macomb? (OPEN END)

19. How would you find out what courses are available?
(OPEN END)

20. Were you aware that Macomb's indoor and outdoor Physical Education and recreation facilities are available for use by all residents of the county?
Yes.....1
No.....2
NO ANSWER.....0

21. Were you aware that Macomb makes other facilities available for community use, such as conference rooms, luncheon and dinner meeting facilities, and classrooms?
Yes.....1
No.....2
NO ANSWER.....0

22. Did you know that Macomb Community college has collegiate sports teams, including basketball, baseball, and soccer?
Yes.....1
No.....2
NO ANSWER.....0

23. Would you want to attend any of Macomb's collegiate games?
Yes.....1
No.....2
DON'T KNOW.....9
NO ANSWER.....0

24. Did you know that you don't have to have a high school diploma to take a course at Macomb College?
Yes.....1
No.....2
NO ANSWER.....0

25. Were you aware that many colleges throughout the country are offering credit courses over public or cable television?
Yes.....1
No.....2
NO ANSWER.....0

26. Would you want to take a course offered over television?
Yes.....1
No.....2
DON'T KNOW.....9
NO ANSWER.....0

I'm going to read some reasons why people want to take classes. For each one, please tell me how important that reason is to you, in your own circumstances, if you were trying to decide whether to take a course.

Please tell me if it is extremely important, important, or somewhat important for you . . .

| | Extremely | Important | Somewhat | Not at all | DK | NA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 27. To take a class to work toward a degree? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 0 |
| 28. To take a class to advance in your present job? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 0 |
| 29. To take a class to learn about your background and culture? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 0 |
| 30. To take a class to be better prepared to participate in volunteer organizations or church and school activities? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 0 |
| 31. To take a class to learn how to search for a new job? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 0 |
| 32. To take a class for personal enjoyment and enrichment? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 0 |
| 33. To take a class to learn to cope with everyday problems? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 0 |
| 34. To take a class to collect veterns or unemployment benefits? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 0 |
| 35. To take a class to improve your basic skills in reading, writing, and math? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 0 |

36. How much would you guess you'd have to pay to take a course at Macomb College? (OPEN END)

Macomb Community College presents cultural affairs programs for the community's enjoyment.

Of symphonys, concerts, plays, musical theater, travel series, lectures, and children's programs, please tell me which ones you and your family would like most to attend?

Which ones would you like least?

| | Most | Least | DK | NA |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 37. Symphonys | 1 | 2 | 9 | 0 |
| 38. Concerts | 1 | 2 | 9 | 0 |
| 39. Plays | 1 | 2 | 9 | 0 |
| 40. Musical theater | 1 | 2 | 9 | 0 |
| 41. Travel series | 1 | 2 | 9 | 0 |
| 42. Lectures | 1 | 2 | 9 | 0 |
| 43. Children's programs | 1 | 2 | 9 | 0 |

44. Some cultural enrichment programs allow for active participation of the community. Would you be most interested in participating in a theater group, a book club, an art league, or a speaker's group?

Theater group.....1
Book club.....2
Art league.....3
Speaker's group.....4
OTHER_____....5
NONE.....8
DON'T KNOW.....9
NO ANSWER.....0

Macomb Community College offers non-credit courses for special interest groups such as senior citizens, women, youth, businesses, industry, and government agencies.

I want to know if you think the college should give a high priority, a medium priority, or a low priority to programs offered. . . .

| | High | Med | Low | NONE | DK | NA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 45. For senior citizens? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 0 |
| 46. For women? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 0 |
| 47. For youth, such as career explorations, hobbycrafts, or sports programs? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 0 |
| 48. For businesses, such as small business workshops? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 0 |
| 49. For industry, providing them with training workshops and conference presentations? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 0 |
| 50. For government agencies, providing them with research and employee workshops? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 0 |

Now a few questions for statistical purposes.

D1. What is your age?

| | |
|---|---|
| 18-24 | 1 |
| 25-34 | 2 |
| 35-44 | 3 |
| 45-54 | 4 |
| 55-64 | 5 |
| 65 or over | 6 |
| NA | 0 |

D2. What is the highest level of education you've completed?

| | |
|---|---|
| Less than High School | 1 |
| High School graduate | 2 |
| Some college | 3 |
| Baccalaureate degree | 4 |
| Post-grad work | 5 |
| NA | 0 |

D3. How long have you lived in Macomb County?

| | |
|---|---|
| Less than 1 year | 1 |
| 1-5 years | 2 |
| 6-10 years | 3 |
| 11-20 years | 4 |
| Over 20 years | 5 |
| NA | 0 |

D4. What is your occupation?

| | |
|---|---|
| Professional/technical | 1 |
| Business owner/Manager/ Public official | 2 |
| Sales/clerical | 3 |
| Operative/auto worker | 4 |
| Skilled craftsman | 5 |
| Retired/disabled/housewife | 6 |
| Unemployed/laid off/ on strike | 7 |
| Other (specify) _____ | 8 |
| NA | 0 |

D5. Which of the following groups includes your TOTAL FAMILY INCOME last year before taxes? (READ GROUPS)

| | |
|---|---|
| $10,000 or less | 1 |
| $10,001-$20,000 | 2 |
| $20,001-$30,000 | 3 |
| $30,001-$40,000 | 4 |
| $40,001-$50,000 | 5 |
| $50,001-$60,000 | 6 |
| Over $60,000 | 7 |
| NA | 0 |

Thank you very much for your help on our survey.

---

D6. SEX OF RESPONDENT (BY OBSERVATION)

| | |
|---|---|
| Male | 1 |
| Female | 2 |

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